



from the South Carolina Education Oversight Committee
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For Immediate Release

September 6, 2017

Grants available to SC school districts to enhance quality in pre-kindergarten programs

Columbia – South Carolina school districts are invited to apply for the SC Community Block Grants for Education Pilot Program, a matching grants program designed to improve children's readiness for kindergarten by enhancing the quality of pre-kindergarten programs for four-year-olds. The program is designed to encourage and sustain community partnerships among schools, school districts, and local communities. This is the third year of the program, which was funded by the SC General Assembly in Proviso 1.65 of the 2016-17 General Appropriation Act with an allocation of \$1 million.

"When there is community support of school initiatives, you often see a positive impact on motivation and learning – at the student and teacher level," said Christopher Cox, an Irmo businessman, parent, and chair of the seven member grants committee that will review submitted applications. "High quality interactions between children and teachers are critical to improve the readiness of children to transition to kindergarten. We hope to be able share many innovative ideas following the grant awards, particularly in high-poverty communities where it can be difficult to find community support."

Cox stated that [applications](#) are available to school districts now and that an intent to apply is due by September 15, 2017. Grant proposals are due by November 1, 2017. Grant applications cannot exceed \$250,000 and there are three available funding categories: Exploration Grants, Implementation Grants, and Sustainability Grants. It is expected that funded grants will be announced in January 2018.

Per Proviso 1.65, the Executive Director of the Education Oversight Committee is charged with appointing the grants review committee as well as reviewing and reporting on the results of the funded programs. The grants review committee, which is an independent group of representatives from the business and education committee, makes the final decision on grant recipients.

The SC Education Oversight Committee is an independent, non-partisan group made up of 18 educators, business persons, and elected leaders. Created in 1998, the committee is dedicated to reporting facts, measuring change, and promoting progress within South Carolina's education system.

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